rewrite

By IzzyQueen12

Book 1: Order of the Stone (Part I)

The five siblings and their friends lived together peacefully in their small little treehouse. They are what anyone would think of teenagers: dorky young, wanting to have fun and most importantly: learning more about the world around them. Of course, all good things came to an end and the eldest sibling finally moved out to start a new life with his new boyfriend (alongside their youngest sister). While they do occasionally come back to visit, it's just not the same without them and the three remaining siblings have to go on adjusting to life without their other siblings around.

Just as the three remaining siblings (Jesse, Jess(F!Jesse) and Nikki) thought they'd finally get to adjust, a new problem came up; a vicious man-eating monster has been unleashed and it's now up to them to save the world. The siblings with their friends of course have to travel to different worlds and facing new obstacles.

But will these siblings and friends be able to take down this terrifying beast, you may ask? Will they be lost in time or be part in history? Will their story be told or will it remain a mystery? Would they be able to make a difference and will they work together to overcome their issues?

Disclaimer: this story contains spoilers for the game(DUH), romance, deaths, blood, cussing/swearing, and ofc, very long chapters! The Jesse's used in this story is the M!Jesse with green suspenders and F!Jesse with the red hair clip. This story will include OC's and if you're not a fan of that then. Too bad I guess BAHAHA.

Five siblings. Seven friends. Their lives used to be normal until the oldest sibling had left to start his own life, the youngest following behind. It's been just a month since their eldest and youngest siblings left and although they had already gotten used to not seeing them around often, the three remaining siblings still miss having them around. But their sadness would soon be replaced with excitement and thirst for new adventure.

The siblings joined Petra on a deal after she saved them from potential death. The man she had a deal with however had different plans and wishes not to follow through with what they've agreed on. Just when he thought he was going to get away with it, the gang banded up and decided to teach him a lesson. However.. they will soon find out that this mysterious man was planning something that would change the fate of the world..

AO3 Version: https://archiveofourown.org/works/51732046/chapters/130782712

Wattpad Version: https://www.wattpad.com/story/224852946-mc-sm-rewrite-season-one-currently-being-revamped

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◦●●⊙✿ Prologue ✿⊙●●◦

Nothing built can last forever, and every legend no matter how great, fades with time. With each passing year, more and more details are lost until all that remains as myths. Half truths; to put simply lies.. and yet, in all the known universe, between here, and the Far Lands, The ORDER OF THE STONE endures, unabridged, as self-evidence fact.. indeed, it is only a troubled land has need for heroes, and ours was fortunate to have, so long ago, four heroes such as these:

Gabriel the Warrior, before whose sword all combatants would tremble,

Ellegaard the Redstone Engineer, whose machines would spark a new era of invention,
Magnus the Rogue, who would channel his destruction creativity for the benefit of all,
And Soren the Architect, builder of worlds and leader of The Order of the Stone.

These FOUR friends together, would give so much more to gain their rightful place as FOUR heroes. Their greatest quest would take them on a dangerous journey to fight a mysterious creature known as the Ender Dragon..

In the end, the Order of the Stone emerged victoriously and the Dragon was defeated. With their story completed, they slipped away into the pages of legends.

But when one story ends, another one begins..

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 1: Treehouse Trouble ✿◉●●◦

"Rise and shine, sleepyhead!" A young teenager around the age of fifteen chimed. She had brown skin, long curly brown hair, dark brown eyes and wore a dark teal and white shirt under brown overalls and brown laced ankle boots. She wore a red hair clip, pushing her bangs out from her face.

Her younger sister groaned, still in bed in her pjs. She was small, short below average and had long curly chestnut brown hair and light brown skin. Her sister looked at herself in the mirror as she made sure that she looked clean and tidy for the day. Today was going to be a perfect day, even if not everybody knew it yet..

"Nikki!" The teenager scolded, desperately trying to get her sister to awaken for the upcoming day.

"Ugh.. Jess, just five more minutes.." Nikki groaned once more, rolling away from her.

"Well, it looks like we'll be heading to EnderCon by ourselves then, huh?" Another voice joked. It came from their older brother, Jesse. He had dark skin with curly dark brown hair and wore a black long-sleeved T-shirt with green suspenders, brown jeans and darker brown shoes.

As soon as Nikki heard this, she immediately pounced off the bed with an excited grin on her face. "I'm up!" She sang. She was so excited that she ended up tripping over their pet pig, Reuben. The little piglet squealed in alarm before giving her an annoyed glance. "Whoops- sorry, Reuben!"

The siblings had only found Reuben last year behind a waterfall. He was cold, scared and hungry.. They just had to take him in. Although Velvet, their eldest brother was at first a little more weary about it, Jesse and Jess both insisted and he became their best friend ever since.

A month ago, Velvet alongside their youngest sister, Lily, moved out. Velvet moved out to live with his new boyfriend in the Nether while their Lily followed along. While they did come back and visit occasionally, it just wasn't the same without them. Although the remaining siblings had already adjusted to life without them, the three remaining siblings couldn't help but to miss them being around dearly.

"Good morning, guys," their friend, Olivia yawned, putting her kinky hair in two low puffs as Jesse and Jess both struggled to hold in their laughter at seeing their youngest sister squirming on the floor to get to her feet. Olivia and their other friend, Axel lived with them in their small treehouse. In fact, they were all best friends since childhood.

Olivia had dark skin and wore a dark green beanie over her hair held in two low puffs and wore a red tank top under a white short-sleeved shirt, a black belt on her waist, black leggings, gray knee-high boots, silver earrings, goggles resting on top of her beanie and dark eyes.

"Hey! I know YOU'RE not laughing, Jesse!" Nikki suddenly retorted. "In fact, that reminds me of the time Axel squished you during our camping trip last year!"

The girls all burst out laughing once the topic was brought up as Jesse's face began to slowly turn red in embarrassment. "Hey, that was ONE time, okay?!" He pouted, however his middle sister was the next to tease him.

"Ooooh like how Nikki totally jumped on you and you thought she was a baby zombie?" She called, which made their laugher increased

Jesse huffed but decide to just let it go, letting out a small chuckle before walking over to an armor stand with a wooden sword. Jess grinned and decided to join him. The two began sword fighting together, trying to see who is stronger as usual. Nikki, after quickly getting dressed, simply leaned against the wall, watching them. Despite the two doing this commonly, Jesse was always the better fighter.

"Talking about zombies, which would you rather fight? A hundred chicken-sized zombies, or ten zombie-sized chickens?" Olivia questioned as she walked to her own workplace and began working on a small redstone invention.

"Just to be clear: you wouldn't have any weapons or armor. So you'll have to fight them with your hands."

Jess glanced over at Nikki, who simply shrugged before she glanced at their friend to answer her question. "I'd rather fight the zombie-sized chickens,'' she answered. "Not because I want to or I think it'll be easy, but because it'll be an abomination."

Olivia processed her answer for a moment before shifting her gaze towards their older brother. "What do you think, Jesse?” She pondered.

Jesse at first didn't answer but after a moment of thinking, he shrugged. "I guess I'd go with the zombie-sized chicken thingies," he responded.

Nikki scoffed playfully. "Yeah, imagine their giant feet,” she thought.

"As I said; an abomination," Jess grinned before placing her wooden sword in her inventory and patting their pet pig's head as he came closer to her.

"So I got this daylight sensor on the roof, now," Olivia explained, the three siblings all listening in as to what she has to say. "And if I get this right then these lamps should turn on when it gets dark. I didn't want to leave Reuben with nothing while we're at the building competition."

"He's coming with us?" Jesse stated, surprised that she'd even consider leaving Reuben behind.

"Really-?"

"What kind of question is that? Of course he is," Nikki frowned as she piped up from the wall she was leaning on.

"Okay, I'm not saying he shouldn't come. I'm not!" Olivia assured them before nervously continuing. "But isn't it weird that you guys bring Reuben everywhere-?" She frowned. "He just makes us look like- I don't know.. amateurs.."

"Reuben's our best friend," Jess reminded her.

This didn't make her feel any better however and instead, she looked offended. "I thought I was your best friend!" She huffed.

"Both of you are!" Nikki assured her. "We're all friends, together."

Olivia's harsh expression softened, glancing at the young girl for a moment before looking away from the three of them to hide her disheartened expression. "I didn't mean anything by it. I'm glad he's coming," she sighed. "I just don't want to give people another reason to call us losers.." She hugged her arms around her body, bowing her head as her frown deepened. "I'm getting tired of it, of being a laughing stock.. and since Velvet isn't here with us anymore, can you imagine what might happen?" Silence rested around the room for a moment before Jesse spoke softly. "Who cares what they think?" He said.

"I know. I just-.. It wears you down.."

"Well, I say you're not a loser, Olvia. So win," Jess advised her, giving her a warm, comforting smile. Their friend smiled a little, but before she could respond, they heard a hissing noise coming from the trapdoor that led outside.

"You guys hear that?" Nikki whispered hesitantly.

"Oh no.." Olivia whimpered in a shaken tone.

Jesse kneeled down to the door, trying to see what might be lurking through the holes. Jess crept behind him, attempting to get a good look for herself just as a creeper popped out of the trapdoor. The four of them all shrieked in fear, including Reuben, who fell off the small chest he was standing on before.

Nikki suddenly stopped and froze, hearing the creeper laughing. But wait.. Creepers can't laugh, can they? Not the last time she checked. The 'creeper' took off its head, revealing a familiar face under the green head. It was their other friend, Axel.

He had puffy black hair, dark eyes, tanned skin, and a unibrow. He wore a green and white hoodie, with black fingerless gloves, orange jean shorts and black sandals. He bubbled in laughter as he weakly climbed into the treehouse.

"Oh man, you guys totally freaked out! That was awesome-." The big guy laughed but was quickly interrupted by Reuben headbutting into his stomach. Now it was THEIR turn to laugh.

"Good one, Reuben!" Nikki snickered, lifting the little pig who was glowing in pride in her arms.

"Axel, what is wrong with you?" Olivia scolded, but the big guy simply ignored her.

"Great. Now I'm going to smell like a pig at EnderCon," he complained before turning towards the siblings. "I thought we were buddies."

"That's what you get," Jesse laughed, earning himself a glare.

Jess meanwhile scanned the mask, impressed. "Cool mask," she complimented.

"It is, isn't it?" Axel beamed.

"Mhm, very convincing."

Axel once again started snickering. "Haha! The look on your faces," he bubbled, which rewarded him with an ice cold glare from his friends.

"Did you bring the fireworks?" Olivia asked, changing the subject.

"Of course I did! Even brought something for the little guy." With that, he happily took out a dragon head matched with wings, placing the wings on Reuben's back and the mask right on his head. The costume was a little big, but it fit him nicely. Nikki observed in delight as Jess began hopping up and down in place in thrill. Jesse however quietly observed while grinning.

Olivia however was far from impressed and was in complete disbelief. "You got Reuben a disguise?" She moaned in disappointment.

"Uhh we're going to a convention? Somebody's gotta wear a costume," Axel replied as if it wasn't already obvious. Reuben hopped from Nikki's arms, making cute dragon noises as he ran around the treehouse, testing his costume out.

"He looks awesome!" Jess grinned.

"Ditto, ditto to that, sis," Nikki agreed.

"It only took about a million hours to build," Axel bragged.

"Alright! Alright!" Jesse interrupted, rolling his eyes playfully. "You did a good job on this, buddy."

"If he was really your best friend, you wouldn't let him go outside and dress like that," Olivia told them as she began to gather her things. Nikki and Jess didn't care to listen, however Jesse gave it some thought.

"The only thing more dangerous than putting a costume ON a pig, is trying to take it off," Nikki assured her.

"Hurry up and grab your stuff," Axel said.

"We'll meet you downstairs, okay?" Olivia added.

"Got it!" Jess grinned as the two disappeared down the trapdoor. Her gaze shifted from the door and to her siblings, who were already getting their gear.

Jesse was grabbing some flint and steel as he looked after Reuben as Nikki simply dug through a chest. Unlike most siblings, they were all very close, however deep down, something was deeply bothering Jess and was slowly eating at her flesh the more she thought about it. They only had each other after their father disappeared without a trace, leaving them alone to fend for themselves.

They never knew what happened to him and only believed that he either abandoned them or had died. Ever since that day, they had to look after each other and watch over one another. Their family even had a motto that reminded each other that no matter where they are, they would still have each other.. Siblings together, family forever..

The conversion with Olivia made her realize one thing: they would possibly get even more harassed at the competition. All those other guys at the building competition would laugh when they see a little girl at the competition. They would be laughing at her. Jess dreaded the thought of her younger sister getting bullied. The thought of it made her sick.

Velvet was the only one who managed to keep the harassment at bay but since he was no longer with them, she couldn't bare to imagine the bullying getting worse. Having an idea in mind, she decided it would be best if she talked about her worries to her siblings but she was unsure of what to say. She decided to take it slow, let it come natural. She then awkwardly walked up to a banner of Gabriel the Warrior, one of the members of the Order of the Stone, their heroes.

"Soooo.." she started uncomfortably. "Gabriel the Warrior. You think we'll ever be that famous?"

Jesse shifted his gaze to face the banner as well before shrugging. "Who knows?" He answered.

Jess then sighed and walked back to the armor stand she and Jesse were just using before. "Say, remember this armor stand that Velvet gave Jesse for his birthday, Nikki? We still don't have anything to put on it."

"Maybe someday," Nikki called from inside the chest, digging for more extras they could use.

Jess then walked to an EnderCon building banner, staring at it before nervously continuing. "One of these days, we're going to win the EnderCon building competition, and then people will say; 'hey, there goes Jess, Jesse, Axel, Olivia and Reuben! Winners of the EnderCon building competition!'"

Nikki lifted her head up from the chest, noticing that she didn't include her. She slowly straightened up and walked up slowly to her older sister. "Jess..? what are you trying to say?" She asked, concerned.

Jesse noticed that she didn't include her as well and shifted his attention onto his middle sister. "Well, she has a point, Jess. I think you forgot to include Nikki. We're all in this together," he said, starting to wonder if his sisters had any beef he wasn't aware of.

"I know but.. I'm worried about you going to the competition, Nikki," Jess finally admitted, a guilty expression spread across her face. "It might be best for you to stay here." She didn't meet her siblings' gaze as she confessed. "It's just that.. There's a lot of jerks out there and.. I don't want them to hurt or mess with you. And since Velvet isn't here with us, things are probably going to be worse."

Nikki looked both shocked and hurt. "What? Why?!" she cried. "You don't think I'll drag you guys down, do you..?"

"Of course not!" Jesse assured her, going up to her and hugging her tightly to help her calm down. "Sure, those jerks will most likely be there, but I won't let them mess with you. Not one of us will."

Nikki stayed silent for a moment, staring blankly at the ground. It was impossible to read her expression. Finally, she spoke, crossing her arms. "Just because I'm younger doesn't mean I can't be as smart as you older guys!" She protested. "I might even be smarter! Chill out, I'll be fine."

Jess placed her hands on her hips, her expression also hard to make out before shifting her gaze towards their older brother.

"Don't worry, Nikki. I believe in you," Jesse smiled, glad at seeing his youngest sister's spirit but when his eyes meant his middle sister's, he scratched the back of his neck nervously, having a gut feeling as to what she might be thinking about. But at the same time, he didn't want to let Nikki that she'll only slow them down. She was his younger sister. He couldn't let that happen. Sure, their eldest sibling isn't there with them but he can't let that stop them from having fun.

Jess eventually gave in, acknowledging their youngest sister's spirit. "Fine.." she sighed. "But stay close to us, okay?"

"Cool! So what are we waiting for?" Nikki piped. "Let's go!"

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 2: Preparation ✿◉●●◦

"Right, we have a competition to win! Let's hurry before we're late," Jesse reminded them as he lifted Reuben in his arms and began holding him carefully as he climbed down the ladder of the treehouse. His sisters quickly followed right after them and once they were safely down, they went ahead and joined their friends, who had been waiting for them.

"Let's roll!" Axel said once the siblings were down.

"Yeah, dude. Roll," Olivia repeated skeptically.

"Let's go!" Jesse said as they began making their way to the competition. Nikki could hardly believe it. Her first EnderCon! It was a very close call back at the treehouse but once it was all talked out, everything was now chill. Now all she had to do was to make sure that Jess never regrets bringing her along. That should be easy. Would it?

"I heard a pretty juicy rumor about the building competition, but you guys have to promise not to say anything about it," Axel spoke up, grabbing his friends' full attention. "Also, it's two parts, each one more exciting than the last."

"Spit it out, Axel," Nikki ordered impatiently.

"Part one: the special guest at this year's EnderCon is none other than Gabriel the warrior, his freaking-self."

"Woah! What's part two?" Nikki asked enthusiastically, the suspense already killing her.

Axel watched as his friends were thrilled and delighted to hear the rest of the news. He was glad he got the reaction he hoped. "Part two, according to my sources, the winner gets to meet him," he happily watched as his friends' jaws dropped in complete shock. He chuckled at each of their reactions. "It won't mean anything if we lose. But if we win? Oh man, it would make up for all the losing!"

"Meeting Gabriel would be a dream AND an honor," Jess gushed, already daydreaming of

them, THEM meeting the all-famous and well known, and BEST warrior of all the land. Hey, he could even teach them how to sword fight better. "Totally! He's awesome. This is a HUGE deal," Nikki agreed.

"Then that means, the faster we get there, the better," Jesse said. As the group continued walking, Olivia suddenly stopped in place, confusing her friends. They shifted their gazes forward, wondering what got her so surprised. The friends came to a halt in front of a small grove of oak trees, EnderCon banners plastered all over them.

The friends stared at it for a moment before Olivia finally spoke. "Soooooo.. Axel, does this 'source' of yours make posters for a living?" She asked, shifting her gaze towards their friend, who was blushing embarrassedly.

"Yeah, um.. My source.. Doesn't really exist. You guys are my only friends," Axel admitted sheepishly.

"Of course we are," Nikki snickered, earning a glare from the big guy.

"Guys! We have to stay focused," Jess reminded them.

"But we NEVER win. And this year, we got Reuben with us," Olivia frowned, pointing at the pig trailing behind them and still wearing the dragon suit. The offended little piglet let out an indigent oink as he continued following behind them. 'We basically have no chance."

"Learn to have some faith, Olivia," Jesse told her.

"Jesse's right," Nikki agreed. "This year, you're going to learn what it's like to win, and plus you guys got me with you this year. All you need is a small portion, confidence and some teamwork. That's all we need to win."

"What?" Olivia shifted her gaze towards the young girl. "You can't be serious, Nikki."

"No no, I'm with that," Axel jumped in.

"Ohh inspirational," Jess teased. "I like it."

"Yeah, I should know," Jesse agreed before playfully nudging his middle sister's arm as she gave him a goofy smile in return. "Right sis?"

"Wait, guys. We're thinking about this all wrong," Nikki suddenly realized. Her friends and siblings shared confused expressions, wondering what she's referring to.

"We are?" Axel questioned, perking a brow.

"Yeah! You don't just BUILD something, we have to DO something to get noticed by the judges!" she explained.

"Okay, then how are we gonna do this?" Jesse was the next to ask.

"We don't just build something functional, we build something fun. After we finish the fireworks machine like we plan, we build something cool on top of it!"

"You might be onto something," Olivia thought.

"If you wanna get a reaction out of the judges, you build something scary," Axel thought. "So I say we build a creeper."

"Wouldn't an Enderman be better?" Olivia disagreed. "I'm more scared of Endermen than creepers!"

"Both have their moments, both pretty scary.." Axel pointed out.

"How about we build a zombie?" Jesse suggested.

"Yeah! They're just like us," Nikki agreed. "When working together, they can REALLY pack a punch."

"That might work, but we should go with the creeper. Axel's right, we need a BIG reaction," Jess figured.

"You're going with Axel's idea?" Olivia complained openly.

"What's wrong with my idea?" Axel scowled.

"Nothing is!" Nikki quickly said, not trying to start any conflict. "It IS cool"

"Yeah," Olivia sighed. "I think this is the first time we've decided on what we're going to do before we get to the competition. Think we got everything we need?"

"It wouldn't hurt to grab a little more," Jess figured.

"Let's get to grabbin' then!" Axel cheered.

"We're so prepared! We can't lose, cannot. Bring it in!" Jesse rejoiced, holding out his hand. Nikki laid hers on top of his and then Jess, Axel, and finally Olivia. "Dare to prepare on three!"

"Nonono! Preparing is daring!" Jess disagreed.

"No, that's the same thing-." Jesse argued

"Forget it!" Nikki chimed in. "Team on three. One. Two. Three..."

"TEAM!" The friends cheered, including Reuben, who oinked happily before they went in their own directions to collect as many materials as possible.

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 3: Building Competition ✿◉●●◦

A few minutes later, the friends all met up after getting their supplies. They all together walked confidently to the Building Competition, holding their heads up high and ready to face any obstacles that they may face.

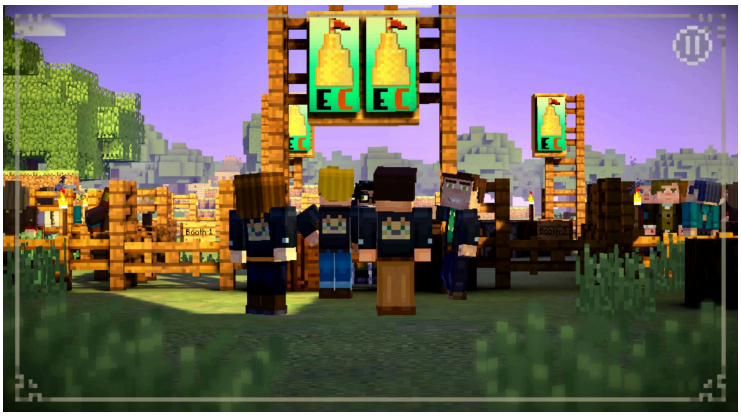
"We know what we're building, we've got all the stuff for it," Axel spoke proudly. "We are so ready."

"This year is going to be different. I'm just not ready to build, I'm ready to win!" Olivia agreed. Upon approaching the gate that led inside the competition, the group spotted a group of friends wearing leather jackets with Ocelots faces sewn on the back of them.

"Oh great.." Axel groaned. "There's Lukas and the Ocelots. The rivalry continues..”

"Man, they've got matching leather jackets and everything," Olivia observed.

"So cool," The big guy sighed. One of the members whipped their heads around, spotting them. He had dark brown hair with narrowed, green eyes.



"Well, well, well.." he huffed. "If it isn't the Order of the Losers!"

"Great, the fail squad's here," Jeered a girl on the team. She was a brunette with blue eyes, her hair behind held back with a yellow hair clip.

"Hey, Lukas," said a bearded teammate, getting his blonde haired friend's attention. "Get a load of these losers."

Lukas had beautiful golden blonde hair with matching ocean blue eyes. Unlike his friends, he seemed.. more quiet, preferring to not mess with their neighboring teams. Instead of saying anything insulting, he stared at them with a blank expression. "Let's go guys," he simply said, but the Ocelots weren't ready to leave yet.

"Where's big brother to come and save you huh?" The green eyed teammate taunted, referring to how Velvet mainly protected them from getting bullied by him and his team but now since he was gone, it made his life easier. He then glanced at Nikki and jabbed a finger at her. "Aw, and look! They even brought a little bitch with them this time!"

Jess furrowed her brow as she scowled. Jesse looked annoyed as well, trying his best to not attack him right there on the spot. Nikki on the other hand let out a patient sigh as she walked up towards the opposing team.

"You must be the ocelots my siblings told me about, huh?" She huffed. "Apparently, what they said is true, just a couple of teens dressed in cow hide."

"What was that?" He then snarled as he stepped closer towards her, but Jesse instinctively stood in front of her.

"Look, if you even lay a finger on her you'll have to get past me!" He said, standing up for her. He wasn't going to let a bunch of crooks lay a hand on his sister.

"You're gonna wish you NEVER said that to me, you little mutt!" Aiden hissed. "They call me Aiden, and you better learn the name if you want to watch your back properly." Once he was finished speaking, he glared at her before threatening backing off.

Nikki, not being fazed by his threat, simply rolled her eyes as the Ocelots finally made their way inside. Jess sighed in relief, hoping that something like that wouldn't repeat itself but atlas, it was only beginning. Once the ocelots were actually gone, the group suddenly looked dumbfounded.

Nikki was just about to go until she noticed her friends' and siblings' expressions. "What? I told you I'd be fine!"

"Name, please?" asked the administrative lady sitting at her desk.

"Axel, and how do you do?" Axel responded

The lady looked at them before shaking her head. 'No, your team name,” she corrected.
"Team name?" the big guy repeated. "We're not ready for this.."

They all paled. Of course! they should've thought of a team name before they got to the competition. They could even feel the Ocelots' gazes burning on them. Jesse was about to say something before Jess stepped in front of him.

"We're the Dead Enders," she blurted quickly, trying to play it cool.

"Dead Enders?" Jesse repeated in a confused tone.

"Dead Enders? Sounds like a pirate name," Olivia commented.

"Oh, hush! Any second longer, and we're going to be called the 'No-Names,'" Nikki scolded.

"Okay, Dead Enders, you guys are in Booth five," the lady said. Axel tried to bravely walk through the gates of the fence that led inside the completion. His plan was to show the Ocelots that he was not afraid of them. His plan backfired when he ended up getting stuck. He tried to squeeze his way through but he didn't budge. He finally got through after Nikki and Jess pushed him through. The Ocelots all watched and had a good laugh before they continued onto their booth. The friends simply ignored them however, rolling their eyes before focusing on finding their booth. Axel however felt embarrassed at his little mistake.

"Neat team name, sis," Jesse complimented as they walked to their booth.

"I always think of the best names," Jess beamed proudly. "Thanks anyway."

When they got to their booth, they noticed, as always, Aiden and his annoying gang were right next to them. Call it a coincidence but every year most of the time, they would be forced to sit right next to each other. Of course, the friends hated it but they had no other choice.

"Is that a freakin' Beacon? They have a freakin 'Beacon, a FREAKIN BEACON?" Axel suddenly gasped, shocked as he peered at the next door booth. Their rivals were pulling out colored glass from their chests and were working together to find out what to do.

"That's stained glass.." Olivia observed. "They aren't just building a Beacon, they are building a Rainbow Beacon!" She gulped, beginning to lose hope. "We're gonna lose.."

"Our design is way better," Jess tried to encourage her friends. "A creeper that shoots fireworks would be WAY better than their fancy light."

"Their difficulty score is going to be higher than our total score," Olivia frowned.

"But we got something that they don't; fireworks," Jesse reminded her. "We should probably stop staring at them though."

It was already too late because one of the members already caught them staring and was ready to pounce. "Ha-ha! Look! It's the Order of the Losers. Again," He jeered.

"Hah! Good one Gill!" The female teammate chuckled at his weak joke.

"We're just looking," Jess said, crossing her arms in annoyance.

"There'll be plenty of time to look at after it wins the EnderCon competition. Again," Aiden bragged.

"You're being unpleasant," Axel scowled, starting to get fed up with Aiden's bullshit.

"Maybe not all of you," he then added, locking a hatful gaze on Nikki. "There's the little bitch again!"

Jesse and Jess both furrowed their brows in anger. This was Nikki's first year here, and he's already getting on her for no reason. She's only new..

"EnderCon doesn't let food and drinks, the last time I checked," He then sneered, referring to Reuben before he shifted his gaze towards Nikki. "Or small little jackasses under the age of five."

"Well then check again. You're gonna regret what you say today, bonehead!" Nikki growled. "Just you wait!"

Aiden was no longer smirking and now he looked rueful as he tried to step closer to her but Jesse blocked him from getting close to his younger sister. "Don't. Even. Try." He hissed in a dangerously warning tone. Jess held Nikki close to her as she glared at him also. Aiden tried to move to the side to get a better angle but Axel stood in front of him, blocking his way.

"I don't think so, punk!" He growled, cracking his knuckles. Aiden bared his teeth in anger and frustration and was just about to lift his fist, but Lukas held him back, breaking up the argument before it got physical.

"Stop wasting your time, Aiden! We've got work to do," The blonde scowled.

Aiden huffed, gently Lukas away before glaring at the friends. "You're lucky I'm busy.." he snarled.

"Yeah, about as lucky as a star," Nikki sarcastically responded.

"Hey, Jesse! Guys!" A new voice greeted. A young teenager about their age made her way over towards them with a smile.

She had auburn red hair under a blue bandanna. She wore a black jacket vest under a dark blue shirt with a long black sleeve on her left arm, and a fingerless glove on her right hand black shorts, and black boots. She carried a pickaxe on her shoulder and looked like she had just been working out previously before coming to stop by the competition.

"Hey, Petra!" Jesse beamed.

Nikki and Jess both snickered at each other as they watched them. The siblings knew Petra for a long time now, and Jesse has had a huge crush on her ever since his eleventh birthday and ever since the two find out, they've been trying to get them together ever since.

The only problem was that many guys and girls had a thing for her but only got rejected in return. They wanted to make sure Jesse could catch her attention enough for her to potentially like him back in return.

"How's the build going?" The redhead asked.

"Only time will tell, but we're optimistic," Axel replied.

"That was a question for Jesse."

"Hey, Petra! I forgot to thank you about that Nether star," Lukas suddenly said, grabbing their attention.

"Hey, Lukas! Not a problem," Petra grinned.

"You helped these tools?!" Axel asked angrily.

"For the right price, I'll help anybody," She replied as she took her leave. "Need anything? You know where to find me."

"But none of us know where to find you," Olivia called to her as she trotted off.

"Exactly."

Once the redhead was out of the earshot, Nikki and Jess both grinned at each other, the both of them determined to get Jesse and Petra together.

"No hard feelings, guys. If you're cool with Petra, you're cool with us," Lukas said, evaporating their thoughts. "So why don't we forget all this and y'know, make this about how cool our builds are?"

Jesse scoffed, rolling his eyes in response. Jess ignored this and walked up to him, the two staring at each other for a moment. Jess was a lot smaller than him, only barely reaching up his shoulders; however as she stared into his soft, ocean blue eyes, she saw that they were filled with genuine and kindness. He wasn't like the other ocelots. He was.. different.

"May the best team win," she grinned.

Lukas was surprised by her sudden kindness. He honestly expected her to be more.. ruder? His team was a huge pain to hers so he thought she would believe he's one of them. Nothingness, he was glad, but at the same time was a little nervous, knowing how competitive Aiden could be. "Be careful what you wish for," he warned.

"We'll see about that.."

"Ladies and gentlemen," the administration announced, grabbing the attention of everyone present at the competition. She explained about the competition and the surprises. After she was finished explaining, the friends heard the Ocelots chanting their team name and doing some sort of handshake.

"Woah. Handshakes?" Olivia mused. "We don't have a handshake.."

"We'll just make one up," Jesse replied, holding his hands out. At his cue, they all did as well. "We'll call it.. uhhh.."

"..The Warrior Whip!" Jess blurted after she noticed her brother's hesitance. The friends clashed their hands together, waving their arms awkwardly.

"And just like that, I'm nervous again," Olivia whimpered.

"Don't talk like that! We could do this!" Nikki encouraged her. "Who needs a handshake to be a good builder anyways? We could do this!"

They all held their hands out, Reuben putting his hoof on top of Olivia's hand before they all cheered.

"Building starts.... NOW!!!" The lady shouted. With that, they started their build. Once they were done with the fireworks machine, all they needed to do was to build the creeper over it.

"Oh no!" Aiden's voice suddenly drew. The friends whipped their heads around to face him. "A fireworks dispenser? I'm so scared!"

"We'll worry about our build and you worry about yours," Jesse replied before going back to work. Once they were done building the creeper, they looked at each other tensely.

"Here comes the moment of truth. here goes nothing.." Nikki muttered before she pulled the lever. Almost immediately, fireworks in an array of different colors shot behind the creeper. Many people stopped what they were doing and watched in awe at their build.

"This is so cool!" Axel gasped breathlessly at their own build. Jess was in awe at the finished result of their build before she noticed the attention it was attracting, making her smile proudly.

"Guys, people are looking at us," Jesse whispered awkwardly.

"Let them look! Just roll with it," Nikki replied. "It means they like it."

The team felt astonished about the new outcome, especially for Nikki because this was her first ever EnderCon. The group smiled brightly as they glanced at each other. The only team that wasn't cheering them on was the Ocelots. Aiden was especially angered.

"What? No way! That's just a bunch of dyed wool!" He protested, but then his eyes met a small lava pool. Making sure no one was watching, he broke the stone block that concealed it

when no one was looking. "Whoops.." he murmured innocently as lava began flowing out. The lava reached Reuben, setting his costume on fire. The poor pig squealed fearfully as he dashed outside of the area where the competition was taking place, and into the forest.

"Oh no! Rueben's on fire!" Jess cried.

"Reuben, no! Come back!" Jesse shouted but the piglet was too frightened to listen.
Nikki turned and noticed Aiden down below. "It was Aiden! That punk!" She growled.
"The lava's getting closer!" Olivia warned.

"It's gonna ruin the build!" Axel realized. Their build was made up of wood and wool, which are very flammable. There wasn't a water source close enough to save the build quickly.

"But Reuben's gonna get lost!" Nikki protested. "I'm going after him!"

Nikki was the first to hop down and was about to run into the forest after him but Maya stopped her in her right in her tracks.

"Where you think YOU'RE going you little brat?!" She taunted.

"Payback time!!" Aiden jeered.

Nikki huffed and pounced on Maya, starting to throw punches. Maya struggled to hold her back until she stood up and attempted to go after Reuben a second time. She took this chance to grab her again, this time pinning her down on the grass as Nikki struggled to free herself.

Aiden raced towards them but before he was about to land a hit on her, all three of them were blinded by purple particles. Maya let go of her grip, as she and Aiden shielded their eyes.

Nikki glanced up and spotted a little bat flying above her. This one, however, had darker fur, and his wings were highlighted in a glowing purple color, the same color as his eyes. The little bat then flew off into the forest before Nikki could get a better look at it.

"Axel, Olivia. Stay here and protect the build!" Jesse ordered, realizing what Aiden was trying to do. He was outraged when he noticed that Maya and Aiden attempted to try and not only destroy their build, but also tried beating up his younger sister.

"We've got it covered Jesse!" Olivia assured him before she and Axel hopped down, placing blocks in front of the lava to prevent it from burning their Creeper build.

Jesse quickly approached Maya and Aiden, popping his knuckles. "Leave my little sister alone!" He shouted as he stood in front of Nikki. "If you're gonna hurt anyone, it's gonna be me! I won't let my little sister get hurt."

Aiden and Maya were both annoyed at this point, things obviously not going to plan. Jesse was now standing up for Nikki. Jess had even joined along, helping to take care of the upcoming problem. Finding that the two were distracted, Jesse shifted his gaze towards his younger sister. "Now hurry guys, go follow Reuben's tracks before it gets dark! I'll catch up as soon as I can."

"Just.. stay safe, okay?" Jess sighed, feeling guilty about leaving their older brother behind to deal with the mess. "C'mon, Nikki! Before Reuben gets too far away."

Nikki wanted to stay and show Aiden who he's messing with but knowing they had to also find their pet, she gave their brother a concerned expression before following her older sister into the forest, following the little pig's tracks.

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 4: Into the Dark ✿◉●●◦

After a couple of hours had passed, it was now getting dark and they were all now outside in the cold, mysterious darkness of the night. Reuben was still nowhere to be found.

"Do you think one of them could be Reuben?" Nikki, glancing over at a herd of pigs. Jess glanced over at the herd as well before shouting, "All of you expect Reuben, shut up!"

All of the pigs stayed quiet instead of the little piglet they hoped to see. As the moonlight shined on the area, things felt... a bit more suspenseful now that it's mostly quiet. Especially with monsters roaming around, they could be anywhere. Nearby, a tree was lit on fire, which must've been caused by Reuben's costume by accident. It produced smoke at a fairly close distance.

Nikki, not noticing it yet, started to ponder. "Is it bad that I'm craving beacon now?" She commented.

Jess couldn't blame her as she eyed the pigs now walking away from them. "Reuben, it's getting kinda scary out here!" she called.

Nikki looked around for a moment before sighing. "I hope Jesse, Axel and Olivia are okay.. Aiden might try something. I wish we didn't leave them behind."

"Me too, but hey, we have each other. It'll make us all feel better knowing that we'll return with Reuben. Plus, they're strong. I'm sure they're probably worrying about US too," Jess assured her before she groaned in frustration. "Man, if Velvet was here, Aiden would've been SORRY."

She knew how Aiden was afraid to stand up to their oldest brother and had he been here, Aiden wouldn't even attempt to mess with them. When they saw the puff of smoke, the sisters started to panic.

"Oh geez! I was just kidding about the bacon! Please don't be toasted, Reuben!" Nikki begged as the sisters ran to where the smoke was coming from.

As they ran over to where the smoke was coming from, they could see Reuben's Ender Dragon costume left on the grass which is a good sign that Reuben isn't toasted into Bacon. Though, they could hear something coming from the cave near them. Which appeared to have a few torches in it. After stomping on the costume and making sure that Reuben wasn't in there, the sisters entered a cold, damp cave.

"Reuben?!" Jess shouted as she looked around. "Reuben? Where are you?!"

The sisters walked across the small pond which led out of the cave and started to look around their surroundings. Suddenly they could hear the sound of something shaking in fear in a small bush.

"Reuben..?" Jess muttered as she went up to the bushes. When she spotted their pet pig, the sisters both sighed in relief as their panic soon began to disappear. "Reuben! There you are!" Jess was beaming, happy to see their pet pig still alive and well.

"We were really worried about you, Reuben. Don't scare us like that again!" Nikki scolded. Reuben was happy to see them as well, but frowned as soon as Nikki scolded him. He knew that he shouldn't have run away. Suddenly, they heard Zombies behind them coming from the cave. The sisters gasped, immediately recognizing the sound.

"Run!" Nikki yelped as the three of them turned their heels and ran as fast as they could away from the zombies. Eventually, after a minute, they ducked in some grass

"I think we're safe here.." Jess panted.

Out of nowhere they could hear hissing.. the sound of a Creeper walking from behind the three of them. From the corner of her eye, Jess could see that it was attempting to explode! She pushed her younger sister and pet pig out of the way, hissing a bit in pain as the creeper exploded. Luckily, she was still on her feet and wasn't gonna go down just yet.

"C'mon! Follow me!" She urged Nikki and Reuben, the fourteenth year old dodging an arrow from a skeleton as the party headed away from the other hostile mobs and to a clearing that had a rocky hill behind them.

"I just gotta say; your skills are life-threateningly horrible!" Nikki commented as they ran.

"Nikki, these things are literally spawning everywhere!" Jess retorted. "And besides, I'm leading us to safety, right?!"

Unfortunately, they ran to a dead end. The Zombie Horde were still slowly following them to the clearing.

"You were saying?" Nikki hissed as she backed away, but out of nowhere Jesse landed in front of them.

He held out his wooden sword, slashing one of the zombies. "BACK, GET BACK!" He shouted as he tried his best to protect his sisters and pet pig.

"Jesse!" The sisters cried, both being relieved and happy that their older brother came to find them. Their celebration was short-lived however. A zombie came and whacked Nikki across the face, hitting her eye.

"NIKKI! GET AWAY FROM HER!" Jess shouted, punching the zombie into the wall, making it disappear in a puff of smoke before checking if their younger sister was alright. "Are you okay?! Oh no! He got you!"

Nikki held her face for a moment before groaning slightly. "I'll be fine, it doesn't hurt too much..” she whimpered.

Jesse was concerned about Nikki, but he continued holding off the Zombie horde to try to buy enough time until his only weapon broke. "Stupid Wooden Sword..!" He groaned in frustration, knowing he didn't have any other kind of weapons with them. He backed away towards his sisters and pet pig, standing in front of them in order to protect them. "You're gonna have to make a run for it okay? I'll distract them!"

"No!" Jess disagreed. "Whatever happens, we'll do it together!"

As the siblings backed away, a spider pounced on Jesse, hissing as it did. Jess and Nikki managed to both take the spider off, but more came in their path. Before another had a chance to pounce on them, a familiar redhead leaped forward, stabbing it multiple times with her pickaxe before taking care of the zombies that were getting too close. At first, they

didn't know who they were through the darkness but then they recognized her as Petra.

"C'mon, let's get out of the open while we still can," the auburn warrior urged the siblings before leading them away from the horde and to her cave, where she said to have something to show to them.

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 5: Petra ✿◉●●◦

"Not that this isn't a cool dimly-lit tunnel but.. how far is this thing you wanna show us..?" Jesse asked, trying to keep his voice steady.

"You guys gotta be careful," Petra teased. "Don't want to get a reputation as a wimp."
"This isn't our first time in a cave, Petra," Jess retorted.

"Yeah, but have you ever seen.. a wither skull?" Petra paused for a bit before dramatically taking out the dark skull from her pocket. The siblings gasped when they saw it. "Fresh from the Nether.."

"So you're telling me that you went to the Nether, killed several Wither Skeletons, risked your life, just to get that dusty skull?" Nikki put two-in-two together, surprised but also impressed.

"Well, it's gonna be worth it to get this dusty old skull," she replied.

"That's insane, Petra.. you could've gotten yourself killed," Jesse scolded.

"Don't worry too much," Petra comforted him as she placed a hand on his shoulder. "I can handle myself."

"And besides, why are YOU so worried?" Nikki suddenly asked, Jess giggling a bit as she and Nikki shared the same expression

"I-I was just worried about one of my friends that's all!" Jesse suddenly looked nervous, trying to keep a calm demeanor.

"Ooooh! But the question is: is she just a friend?" Jess smirked, as she and Nikki tried their best to try and show Petra that he liked her, but unlike them the redhead wasn't catching on.

"Y-Yes just a friend!" Jesse whined, feeling quite embarrassed for how his sisters were acting.

Luckily, the auburn warrior simply ignored their conversion as she went on, "there's this guy I'm meeting with at EnderCon. He's gonna trade me a Diamond for it."

"Is a Wither Skull really worth that much?" Jesse challenged.

"As long as he's willing to pay, I earned that diamond."

"I honestly don't know about this.. it seems sketchy, why didn't he get the skull himself?" Jesse frowned, finding this some-what deal fishy.

"That's true, I'm not gonna judge," Petra shrugged.

"Wow.."

"Wow what?"

"In a single day, you went to the nether, you killed a wither skeleton- I mean, we did build a super-cool statue but still, it must be pretty sweet being you huh?"

Petra chuckled at the little compliment. "I mean you three could come with me."

"We'd be honored to back you up!" Jesse grinned, happy that the redhead offered to take them with her.

"You don't have to get all excited," Petra smiled a bit, not realizing that she was blushing slightly. "I just said-."

"That he would come with you! I know! I was right here! It's amazing!" Nikki suddenly squealed. "It means it's a date, right?"

Jesse suddenly blushed deep red, rubbing the back of his head "N-No, it's not a date! I'm just.. helping her out, that's all."

"You're right! Maybe more than a dateee?~" Jess asked slyly.

"No, no! He's just gonna help me, okay, guys?" Petra corrected them before turning away and leading them to a crafting table. "Since that wooden sword of yours got busted.."

"You're gonna give us a new one?" Nikki guessed.

"Even better, you could make one yourselves."

Jesse walked over to the chest and opened it, exploring what was hidden inside. "Hey is all this stuff yours?" He asked curiously before grabbing a few materials from the chest.

"No, we're just taking stuff that someone happens to leave here,"Petra replied sarcastically. "Of course it's mine."

"Just making sure!" Jesse slightly chuckled as he took out two Cobblestones and a stick. Now crafting a Stone Sword.

"See? Isn't it better when you make it yourself?" Petra grinned.

"Sure is!" Jesse smiled as he put his stone sword away. Jess crafted herself a stone sword after accidentally crafting a lever instead while Nikki crafted an iron sword.

After they were done, the party of four began to exit the cave. Cool refreshing air brushed against them as they walked through the bridge over a huge ravine. As they did they could see EnderCon from the distance of the bridge they were standing on.

"Check it out, EnderCon's all lit up!" Petra smiled.

Jess gasped, seeing their creeper with fireworks coming out of it. "I can't believe it! We won!" she cheered.

"Looks like our idea worked like a charm!" Nikki chuckled.

"Good for you guys," Petra congratulated them

"It's about time we beat Lukas and his gang of jerks, what kind of stupid name is ‘the Ocelots’ anyway?" Jesse bragged. Petra's face fell a bit. Jess' and Nikki's did too.

"Y'know Lukas may seem kinda arrogant but he HAS come through for me," Petra said. "You might wanna get to know him more, just in case."

"Yeah, maybe you're right," Jess replied.

"I doubt it," Jesse denied, frowning a little.

"I'm just saying," Petra shrugged. "If you run into him at EnderCon, try talking to him."
"Don't need a lecture on the power of collaboration, Petra," Jesse retorted.

Petra giggled as Nikki socked her brother's arm. "How about a lecture of sisterly rage? She's short, but deadly!" She grinned.

"Scary, isn't she?" Jess chuckled.

"Worse than that skeleton I fought," the redhead played along,

"C'mon let's hurry!" Nikki urged them as she ran ahead. Jess and Reuben both trailed after her, leaving Jesse and Petra alone. The two glanced at each other, Petra giving him a small smile.

"Remember what EnderCon was like before it was cool?" She remembered.

"Remember what WE were like before WE were cool?" Jesse grinned as he kept his eyes on her.

"Some of us will never be cool."

"Ha-ha.."

"How you've been doing after your brother left? I never met him.. but I could imagine how hard it must've been for you guys."

"Actually, we're still doing well. Well, at first it was hard because we weren't used to not seeing him everyday but now, I think we're doing better," Jesse replied. "I'm just glad he's happy since he used to always spend his time taking care of us. He still comes around and visit sometimes." He grinned. "Maybe you could meet him when he comes back?"

"That'll be nice.. Isn't it weird how most people assume we're a couple? Like, even Nikki and Jess seem to be intrigued with the idea.. crazy right?"

"W-What? I- yeah! Yeah! It's crazy", Jesse stammered. "But it isn't too crazy, Y'know I-I-.." Before he could finish, Reuben let out a frightening squeal, running back to him. His sisters paddled after him, both their swords drawn. Jesse froze, wondering what was the problem.

"What's the matter?!" He asked quickly as he drew his sword.

"Creepers!" Nikki cried, pointing to the creatures stepping onto the bridge.

"Shit.." Jesse muttered, glancing around.

"We're cornered!" Jess cried.

"There's only one way off this bridge!" Petra realized, drawing her sword. "Whatever we do, we do it together!"

"There's too many of them!" Nikki yelped.

"Everyone, JUMP!" Jesse finally ordered. Right on his cue, the four of them hopped off the bridge together.

The siblings found themselves free-falling through the air, waving their arms all over the place as Petra just seemed to naturally glide down. The redhead then looked at Jesse and gave him a warm smile. A new, welcoming feeling took over Jesse as he smiled back at her.

Their faces were merely a few inches apart, but before they could do anything else, Petra's face turned into a look of horror. Jesse was confused but turned around midair to see what she was looking at. There, he spotted a creeper ready to explode. Before it could explode however, Jess punched it away into a flock of chicken just in time however before Jesse could think of anything else, he suddenly belly flopped into the water.

"Burns, it burns!" He howled in pain.

"Don't you know? You dive INTO the water! You don't land on top of it!" Petra scolded. "Now put yourselves together and follow me."

Jesse noticed his sisters paddling after Petra, Reuben riding on Nikki's back as if she were a floatie. He then sighed and paddled after them. It was finally time to go to EnderCon. They had a deal to make..

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 6: Welcome to EnderCon ✿◉●●◦

"EnderCon is so big!" Nikki gasped in awe as she looked around at all the different stores and places. Her siblings along with Axel and Olivia always told her stories of the place but she never had seen it with her own eyes.

"Careful, not everyone is very friendly here," Jess warned her younger sister, who was letting her eyes wander around the huge city. After reaching towards shore, the party of four had taken a shortcut through the woods after escaping the huge destruction of the bridge. As they walked, they finally met with Axel and Olivia, who were nervously waiting for them.

"Jesse! Jess! Nikki!" Axel boomed, happy to see his friends in one piece. "And... Petra?" Olivia said, puzzled at seeing the Auburn warrior.

"Hey, you all know Petra, my new super-close best friend? We're super close now," Jesse grinned, trying to be cool. Olivia and Axel both have skeptical looks as Petra facepalmed, explaining how they ran into each other while they looked for Reuben.

"And they nearly kissed when we fell from the bridge!" Nikki added.

"Yeah! Neither of them would admit it, but it was pretty sweet!" Jess chuckled. Axel and Olivia were both pleased to hear about Petra's and Jesse's growing relationship but became concerned when they noticed Nikki's eye.

"Hey, what happened to your eye, Nikki?" Olivia inquired.

"Oh, this? Nearly forgot about it," the young girl admitted. "Had a little run-in with some zombies but I'm fine. It's just a black eye. I'll live."

"Nikki was strong when we were back there dealing with those zombies, really stood her ground," Jess grinned as she ruffled her little sister's hair lovingly. Nikki couldn't stop herself from smiling.

"What were you doing in the middle of the woods, Petra?" Axel speculated.

"Nothing. Just.. drawn to Jesse's high-pitched screams," Petra half-lied, but she sounded hesitant.

"Sorry we didn't come with you guys," Olivia frowned, feeling guilty that they weren't there to help them.

"But hey, we won!" Axel added, showing them the large wool Creeper behind them. It felt so lifelike, even Petra felt like it would explode in any minute.

"I'm proud of you guys," Jesse congratulated with a smile.

"Aw, shucks!" The big guy said bashfully.

"Don't make me blush," Olivia pleaded before she narrowed her eyes dangerously, a serious expression sat across her face."Seriously, DON'T."

"Hey, guys," Petra suddenly spoke up, interrupting their celebration. "It's time to go see about that 'thing.'"

"Oh yeah, the 'thing,'" Jesse agreed.

"Subtle," Olivia commented.

"Yeah?"

"As to a punch in the face," she continued. "Axel, and I were heading into EnderCon anyway. See you guys there!"

"I heard there's free cake by the math booth!" Axel gushed as he dashed deeper into the town with Olivia following behind him.

Once the quartet were alone, Petra shifted her gaze towards the siblings. "Hurry, we're supposed to meet with him over there," she said as she pointed at the alley. Without another word, they, including Reuben, walked to this dark alley. Jess stayed behind her older brother as she trembled slightly in fear. She was always afraid of the dark.

"Dark.. dark.. very dark.." she whimpered, trying to mask her fear.

"That's weird.." Petra muttered. "He said the dark, creepy alley close to the gates but he's not here. Maybe he's late?"

"Are you sure this is the same dark creepy alley he meant?" Nikki questioned.

"I was. Okay, new plan. You three stay here just in case this IS the spot he meant and I'll look around," the redhead decided. "I guess I got the spot wrong but then again, I never really did get a meet-up spot wrong before.."

Jesse nodded. "Okay, you go, Petra while we hold down the fort."

Petra smiled softly at him, causing him to blush lightly. "Thanks, Jesse. I'll be back before ya know it, and if he comes while I'm gone then stall for me."

"I don't know. I feel something off about this deal," Nikki frowned.

"All my deals feel off," Petra assured her. "That's why I always keep them secret. I'll be back before you know it." Without another word, the redhead turned and trotted deeper down the alleyway.

Once the redhead was gone, Jess shifted her gaze towards her older brother, her eyes showing concern and fear. Jesse noticed this and tried to help comfort her as best he can. "Hey, don't worry. We'll be done with this soon," he consoled.

"Something feels off here," Nikki frowned. Jess couldn't help but to agree. "Who is this guy anyways? I'm wondering if there's something we don't know."

"What do you mean, Nikki..?" Jess questioned.

"I dunno. I know Petra is secretive or whatever but it doesn't take a blind person to figure out that something ain't right."

"But this is for Petra. She worked hard to get that wither skull. I think we should at least help her get what she's been working for," Jesse said, but he had to admit that Nikki was definitely onto something.

Jess suddenly noticed a chest in the alleyway. Strange.. she hadn't been in many alleyways but why would someone just leave it there? Perhaps something interesting was held inside. "What's this?" She wondered, stepping closer to the chest but before she could open it, a loud AHEM suddenly echoed through the alleyway, which caught the siblings by surprise.

The three of them flinched, however Jesse acted quickly, throwing his arm in front of his sisters to protect them as they faced a tall, skinny man now standing in front of them. He had long black hair that reached down his shoulders, had dark eyes, wore a long green robe

with a golden belt with a dark blue gem holding the belt up, black boots and a black long beard.

"And just who are you three?" He scowled. The siblings glanced at each other, unable to answer or even find the right words to his question. The man noticed this and scowled once more. "I'm waiting!"

"The name's Jesse," Jesse answered calmly. He knew hostility won't help Petra with her deal at all, though he remained ever so cautious. "What's in it to you?"

"I'm supposed to be meeting with Petra, not whoever you three are supposed to be," the man growled. "Give me one good reason why I shouldn't walk out of here right now!"

"We're with Petra," Nikki said, walking past her brother and standing up high. "We're her partners."

The man just rolled his eyes. "I made a deal with her, not her boyfriend and partners!"

Jess and Nikki both snickered as Jesse gave them both the death stare. "You're both NOT allowed to turn that into anything," he hissed warningly before he faced the man. "You're the guy who wanted that wither skull right?"

"No so loud you idiot!" The man barked. "Too many people know my business already. Do you have the skull?"

"Petra has it and she'll be right any minute now," Nikki responded as Jesse kept his eyes on the man. Nikki was right about one thing; something DEFINITELY wasn't right.

"As long as she's bringing. I suppose it wouldn't kill me to wait a minute longer," he figured as crossed his arms. The five of them waited uncomfortably in silence before a familiar voice finally spoke.

"Ivor! Sorry I'm late, but good things are worth waiting for, right?" Petra said as she made her way towards them. "I got what you asked for."

"If you have what you promised us," Jesse added.

The man or, Ivor per say raised a brow. "You didn't say an 'us' when we first met and I don't like surprises. If these are the sorts of people to associate with, and if you're willing to share serious business with CHILDREN.." He glared at Nikki before continuing. "Perhaps we should call this whole thing off."

"My friends are fine, right guys? There's no problem here. It's all a misunderstanding."

"Petra, this guy gives me a bad feeling," Jess whispered over to the redhead but she just growled lowly in annoyance.

"And I'll give you a bad feeling if you ruin this for me," she threatened.

"I'm telling you, something is out of place here," Nikki whispered quietly but Petra and Jesse both didn't seem to hear her.

"We're cool if he's cool," Jesse decided.

"It's settled then, you're both cool."

"Proceed then," Ivor said. In cue, Petra handed him the wither skeleton skull. He took it and examined it carefully, making sure it wasn't a fake. He looked pleased, which relieved Jesse a bit.

"And my diamond?" Petra reminded him.

"Take it. you've earned it," Ivor replied then resumed studying the skull. The four turned their heads, glancing at the chest sitting behind them. Petra walked over to it, opening it.

Jess was excited to see the prized diamond but was disappointed as their suspicions were confirmed.

"Wait.. this isn't a diamond.." Jesse said.

"You're right," Jess added. "It's a-."

"No, it's lapis!" Petra growled, whipping her head around to where Ivor was, and seeing him no longer there. He had runned off. "Of all the dirty, underhanded tricks to pull. I can't believe that guy got one over me!"

"I TOLD you something was up!" Nikki said, crossing her arms.

"He's gone!" Jess shouted as she stood up.

"Ohh plot twist! You know what that means!" Nikki then grinned before she shot out of the alleyway like an arrow. "HOT PURSUIT TIME! YEE-HAW!" Reuben oinked gleefully and galloped right behind her, the rest following right behind.

"It's either I'm getting that diamond or my skull back!" Petra vowed.

"And we'll make him pay, right? Right?" Jesse added, however the redhead only gave him an annoyed glance.

"Guys! Less talking, more running!" Jess ordered as they ran past buildings and people.

"Did you see him anywhere?" Petra asked as the quartet stopped to take a quick look around.

"No. I think we lost him," Jess replied, seeing that there was no sign of him at all.

"Then we'll have to find him again," Jesse decided. "Let's split up, it'll cover more ground. Jess, you, Nikki and Rueben go that way while Petra and I go the other way."

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Five of them all nodded as they separated. The couple walked in awkward silence together. Jesse managed to keep a calm demeanor, glancing around to look for as much as he could to look for clues as to where Ivor must've ran off to. He and Petra briefly split up for a couple minutes to cover more ground yet, they still found nothing. They hoped Jess and Nikki had better luck. When he noticed Axel by the chicken booth nearby, an idea popped in his head, but he needed to get permission first.

"I know you wanted to keep this secretive but can I tell Axel-?" He asked. "Knowing them, they would probably be a huge help in finding Ivor."

Petra glanced at the big guy for a moment before chucking. "It's alright, I already have that covered," she assured him.

"Oh really? Then let me pay a little visit," he joked before heading towards his friend.

"Hahaha!" Axel taunted a falling chicken as it fluttered clumsily into the fence of the chicken machine. "Thought you could just wiggle right out of that trap, didn't you? Well, wiggle as much as you want! You're still not going anywhere!" He was always fond of chicken machines. And.. being unnecessarily mean to birds for no reason. Although Jess would always scold him for it, Jesse always found it funny.

When the big guy felt a tap on his shoulder, he turned around quickly and saw Jesse standing there behind him. "Jesse! Nice to see you around. Where's Nikki and Jess?" He greeted casually.

"Axel, listen up, have you seen a creepy-looking guy anywhere?" He questioned, keeping his voice low just in case.

"No, but Petra told me what happened," Axel replied. "I'm keeping a lookout." It wasn't all that convincing at all and Jesse stared at him suspiciously, mainly trying to mess with him. He knew that Axel HATED being stared at and he couldn't help to snicker under his breath when the big guy spoke once more. "Alright, alright! I'll look!" He snapped, getting tired of all the staring but he quickly shifted his gaze back on the chicken machine. "After I watch one more chicken get owned."

Petra walked towards them, sighing in annoyance at Axel's reluctance to help. She then grabbed Jesse by the wrist and practically started dragging him along with her. Jesse was surprised by this, freeing himself from her grasp. "Petra-?" He said, wondering what got her so upset.

"I'm sorry, I'm just- it's so frustrating. Axel could be so lazy and annoying sometimes, I'm surprised you guys managed to put up with him everyday," the redhead scowled.

Jesse was shocked by her words. Sure, Axel could be a bit much sometimes but he knew that he had a good heart and he was in the right place. "Petra, I get that you're mad but you don't have to take it on Axel," he frowned.

"Why? Why shouldn't I?"

"Because either way, it wasn't Axel's fault why we're here in the first place. I think you should've thought things through first before agreeing to that deal," he responded surprisingly calmly. "Let's just focus on the mission instead, okay?"

Petra was surprised by his words but simply rolled her eyes before glancing around the perimeter once more. "Geez, I hope Jess and Nikki have better luck finding that creep," she grumbled.

"Where did you even find him?"

"Just a little before the building competition.. he seemed so eager to get a wither skull. I don't know why, but that's not important now."

Jesse processed the information for a moment before noticing Olivia nearby. He grinned, knowing that she might be a huge help in helping them find who they're looking for.

Olivia was staring up at the chicken machine, watching it curiously. She couldn't exactly get why Axel found it so interesting, but at the same time, he gets excited very easily. Or maybe he knew something about it that she doesn't? Or that he's somehow smarter than his dense personality appears to be.

Her thoughts were halted when she felt a light tap on her shoulder and turning around, she saw Jesse standing behind her. She was confused. She thought he was supposed to be with Petra doing this 'thing.'

"Remember the thing we had to go do with Petra?" Jesse asked, reminding her of the 'thing' he spoke of earlier. "Long story short, we met up with this guy, who cheated me and Petra on a deal, and now we're trying to catch him. You in?"

"Oh, I'm in all right," Olivia agreed, happy to finally be part of the excitement for once. "Where's Jess and Nikki?"

"They're somewhere else trying to look for him too. I think it's time that we catch up to them," he replied. With that, the two joined Petra before dragging Axel away from the chicken machine. Once they were all together, they decided it's time to see what Jess and Nikki had found.

As Rueben and the sisters walked, they saw a crowd of people surrounding none other than Gabriel the Warrior himself. "Talk about a crowd," Nikki commented. "Let's keep looking."

As Jess moved her dark brown hair out of her face, she spotted a familiar blonde boy. It was Lukas! The rest of the Ocelots weren't with him! It was her chance to finally go and talk to him without any distractions or obstacles.

Lukas had decided to head into EnderCon alone as he stared blankly at the slime ball he was just playing with, tossing it up and catching it. He and his friends had just lost for the first time in a long time and while he was neutral about it, Aiden was very much furious and decided to head out early. Maya and Gill were angry as well, but it didn't matter to him.

He did feel disappointed that his attempt to make peace with Jesse's gang. Sure, Jess was friendly to him but overall, it was a complete failure. Yet another attempt to try and win back Jesse's trust after their falling out years ago didn't work. Maybe next time? If he would have a chance.. suddenly, he noticed Jess and Nikki nearby, alone. Without the rest of their team with them. What were they doing..? Could it be a chance to at least make peace with Jesse's younger sisters?

"Nikki, stay here," Jess whispered to her younger sister. Nikki was confused but she did as her sister said, standing where she was as her older sister made her way towards the blonde.

"'Sup," she greeted.

"'Sup," he replied.

"Nothing. 'Sup with you?"

"Nothing. 'Sup with you?"

She giggled. "I just said nothing."

Lukas chuckled as well before smiling down at her. "Congratulations on the win. I mean like I

think our beacon did great but yours was amazing too. I mean like. Fireworks? A big scary creeper? Isn't that cool?"

Jess grinned. "Thanks. Your rainbow beacon wasn't too shabby. I really did like it but uhh.."

Lukas raised a brow curiously as Nikki came towards him, but she was less than pleased to see him. "You know that little stunt your friend pulled really hurt our pig," she frowned.

"Yeah. I'm sorry about that but I have nothing to do with it," he shrugged.

"You're lucky we found him. Things wouldn't be all that pretty if we didn't," the young girl replied, but she was glad to see that Lukas wasn't like the other ocelots.

"Oh geez.. I hope the little guy is doing okay."

"He is, don't worry," Jess assured him. She looked around quickly before leaning in closer and lowering her voice. "Hey, uhh, you haven't seen a creepy guy with long hair and a beard roaming around, have you?"

"I don't think I have. Why?"

"He kinda scammed Petra out of a diamond earlier."

"Oh geez. Everyone knows you do not mess with Petra, not if you know what's good for you. I'll keep an eye out, okay?"

"Thanks, I really appreciate it."

"So uhh. Are we cool?"

"Yeah, you're cool with me."

"Cool-cool."

She grinned. "Cool beans."

"Cool-a-Rama."

Jess giggled before giving him a kind, yet somewhat seductive grin. "Ha! I'll see ya later, Lukas."

"Yeah, I'll see you two around, Jess," the blonde replied, though he felt some butterflies in his stomach, which confused him, though he decided to ignore it.

"I saw that," Nikki immediately snickered as they walked from him to continue their search.
"Saw what?" Jess asked.

"Don't lie, you were totally trying to flirt back there!"

"Was not!"

"Girl, you were all smilingly and was tryna do those flirty gestures, don't you try to deny it."
"..I was only being nice."

"Ha-hah! Whatever you say, Jess."

Jess crossed her arms as they walked around, continuing to be on a lookout. However, she felt herself getting distracted. She just can't stop thinking about Lukas.. Petra was kinda right. He wasn't really like the other ocelots. He was different..

"There!" Nikki suddenly shouted as she pointed at the man walking through a crowd.

"Aha.. caught you, weirdo," Jess muttered under her breath as the sisters followed behind him before something or more preferably someone got in their way. It was Aiden! Of course..

"Woah! Well if it isn't Team Trash bag! How's your stupid little pig?" He nagged as he got in front of them. "I heard that intense heat could cause brain damage but it might just boost

up the flavor of something crazy, though."

Jess tried moving over to see where Ivor was going but Aiden kept getting in her way. "Back away, Aiden. I don't have time for this," she scowled.

"You got time to do shit? What do you have time for? Trying to get a life? Trying to make friends?" He snickered before forcing her to glance at him by holding her by her chin.

"Hands OFF," Jess growled, instinctively shoving him away from her.

Aiden scowled. "You bitch."

"Aiden, you IDIOT. She said back off," Nikki shouted, outraged that he would try to lay a hand on her sister.

"Who are you calling an idiot?" Aiden snarled.

"Perhaps you didn't hear what I said before 'Aiden,' you goddamn bitch."

"And what makes you think you're better than me? You're just a little mutt who thinks she's all that. You're lucky big brother was there to save you because I would've burned you alive when I had the chance!"

Jess' eyes widened in shock by his words before glancing at her younger sister. His words struck Nikki's last nerve. "Big. Mistake," she hissed under her breath, but before she could do anything, Jess quickly held her back. Nikki didn't like this, starting to struggle against her older sister's grasp.

"Can you not?" Jess hissed warningly under her breath before dragging the two away from Aiden to continue their search.

"Just you wait, you bitch. Sooner or later, you won't be laughing so much," Nikki vowed as her sister dragged her away from the scene.

Once the two were far enough away, Jess sighed in relief before glaring at her younger sister. "I know he's supposed to be a jerk or whatever but you didn't have to cause a scene like that. We're supposed to be keeping a low profile? Imagine if Ivor saw us," she reasoned.

"Why shouldn't I cause a scene? That guy makes me mad," Nikki scowled. "I wasn't going to let him touch you like that and then act like he's so tough and bougie."

"..I'm already used to it by now.. but Nikki, I'd rather worry about your safety. You don't know what Aiden could do."

"He doesn't know what I could do either.."

"Let's just focus on the mission, okay?" Jess began to look around. She felt like Ivor would've gotten away by now, but she managed to spot him walking through the crowd just nearby. "There!" She pointed at their target in their Ray of vision. It was only a matter of time..

"Let's hurry before he gets away again," Nikki advised. The sisters crept slowly behind him quietly. He had come to a group of people and began to speak and the people he was talking to even recognized him. They sounded as if they were close friends. But that's weird.. Why would a secretive person like Ivor would be so social during a time of escape?

The sisters didn't think much of it however and once they came close to him, Jess grabbed him by the shoulders and forced him to turn around. "Hey what are you-." She froze when it was discovered that they weren't following Ivor afterall. They weren't even a 'he' at all.

"What do you think you're doing?!" She snapped, her confused friends glaring at them. "Oh, I'm sorry I-." Jess tried to apologize but the woman interrupted her once more.

"Get away from me!"

"I said I was sorry.."

Embarrassed, Jess backed away as the woman who looked vaguely like Ivor glared at them before turning back to her friends. "Welp. That worked out really well," Nikki commented sarcastically. The sisters found themselves in the middle of EnderCon, alone.

Before Jess could retort, she was cut off by an alarmed squeal. Surprised, she glanced around them and realized that Reuben wasn't there with them. "Reuben? Where'd you run off to?" She called out but got no response.

"There!" Nikki cried, pointing at a nearby butcher.

"Get your pork chops here! Fresh off the bone!" A nearby butcher called. "Nothing sticks to your ribs like a juicy pork chop!" As he spoke, he plopped Reuben onto the table, and raised his stone axe.

"Reuben!" Jess cried, her eyes widening in horror as the sisters speed-walked towards the booth.

The butcher glared at them, annoyed. "Hey, what's the big idea? I'm trying to run a business here!" He grunted rudely.

"That's our pig! You kidnapped our pig!" Jess insisted.

"Well, I don't know what you're talking about, chef. I found this pig wandering all alone in the streets," the butcher shot back. "Not the fattest pig I've ever seen.. but he should cook up real nice anyways."

"Please, he's our friend," Jess pleaded. Nikki of course felt scared for the little pig, however she was more calm about the situation, not being too close to the piglet as much as her older siblings are.

"To me he's inventory," he responded. "I might be amenable to some kind of trade. Not that you look like you two got much of value. I gotta have some kind of return on my investment."

The butcher teasingly raised his axe, making it seem like he was just about to attack Reuben at any minute. Jess knew she had no other choice. If they didn't do anything quick, then Reuben is going to be toasted. Sighing, she slowly took out her stone sword, making the butcher's eyes widen in delight. "All I have is this sword," she said.

"Oh, that's very nice. With this I could cut my butchering time in half," the butcher muttered in awe before greedily snatching the sword, observing it for a moment before smirking. "Nice doin' business with you. But sadly, I don't have time to give away meat."

Just as he raised the sword to strike, a dark bat with purple glowing highlights on his wings popped out of the ceiling, screeching loudly. Startled, the butcher dropped his weapon and stepped back in alarm. This was a mistake, however, for when he did, he slipped on sticks from past-used weapons and ended up colliding with the ground. He ended up hitting his head so hard that he was knocked out cold.

Nikki was astonished and very much impressed, staring at the small animal in awe. Just by the purple particles it produced, she recognized it as the same bat who saved her from Maya and Aiden before. It's clear that he isn't a normal bat. But.. where did he come from? Jess was also impressed by the little bat, but unlike her little sister, she wasn't too much in awe about it.

"Holy shit.. what is that?" She gasped.

"He's so cool!" Nikki gushed, coming closer to the new creature. The little bat stared at her curiously before flying around her. She held her arm out, the small bat landing on it. The little girl was even more impressed as she observed how different it looked. He wasn't like a normal bat. He was something more..

Jess didn't mind the little bat and as the two bonded, she scooped up Reuben in her arms. "Oh, Reuben. I'm so sorry. I was too focused on looking for that creepy guy, I didn't notice," she apologized, checking for any injuries. The little pig at first looked pissed before forgiving her, oinking warmly as she cuddled close to her. Jess smiled, holding him close before she heard a familiar voice call out her name.

"Nikki! Jess!" Jesse called, he and Petra walking towards them with Olivia and Axel accompanying them. He was just about to greet them when he noticed the little bat sitting on Nikki's arm. "What is that-?"

"You mean him? He saved me earlier.. and Reuben from some butcher trying to cook him up," Nikki responded. "Jesse, can we keep him? Pleaseeee?"

Jesse stared at the little bat, unsure of what to say. He noticed how different he looked, something way more different from a normal-looking bat and that worried him. But at the same time, he didn't want to hurt his younger sister's feelings. "Nikki, I don't think we'll be able to keep it," he frowned. "That thing looks like a devil-spawn."

"What? No! He's so cute! If he was evil, he would've attacked by now," Nikki protested. She scratched behind his ears, the little bat purring a little, seemingly liking it. He then flew from her arm, flying in circles around her head, causing a soft breeze to blow around her face. It felt nice after sweating half her body from running around.

"I think we should keep it- or him. If it keeps her happy?" Jess said, still unsure about the little bat but if Nikki was happy, she was happy.

"Whatever. He'll leave on his own," Jesse predicted.

"I think I'll give him a name: Zephyr," Nikki decided as she grinned happily as the bat rested on her shoulder once more. "I have a feeling we're gonna be together for a long time."

Zephyr let out a happy squeak, seemingly agreeing.

"Be careful though. That thing is an EnderBat. They're so rare that reports of them having been heard in a long time," Olivia warned. "They're like Endermen- but in bat form."

"Nikki, really? We don't have time for this," Petra scowled.

"But-." The little girl tried to protest once more but was cut off by the redhead.

"Whatever. We're getting off track. Did you see him anywhere?" She asked, hoping that the two had at least found something that may lead them closer to Ivor.

"We thought we saw him, but it was just a false alarm," Jess reported, frustrated as to how he had somehow gotten away so quickly.

"There he is!" Nikki cried, pointing at the mysterious man about to run towards the hall, where the Keynote is being held. "Let's go after him!" She was about to run towards the city hall, but Petra caught her just in time before she did.

"Woah there, half-pint. We need to get past that usher to follow him," Petra told her, glancing at the tall man with long blonde hair, a blue shirt, khaki pants with white long socks, brown shoes, and a blue and white necklace. Wasting no time, the whole group ran up to him.

"So, yeah, hey," Jesse greeted awkwardly.

"What would it take to get us inside tonight?" Petra asked, sounding a bit more smooth.

"Um, tickets?" The usher answered, chuckling a bit at his own horrible joke. "That was funny, you should laugh."

"I know this might sound crazy but we're on an important mission," Jesse said, sounding a bit more desperate.

"Then I hope your 'mission' came along with tickets cuz' otherwise.." He said but when a chicken flapped by, it somehow terrified the usher. Disappointed, the group trotted away, realizing they needed to find another way in.

"We gotta do something!" Petra decided.

"Like what? The show has been sold out for weeks!" Olivia reminded her. "I could bust right through!" Axel suggested. "But I just need a wind-up room.." "You're NOT punching anything. We need a distraction," Jesse spoke sternly.

Jess noticed Zephyr flying off Nikki's shoulder and flew up towards the glass holding the chicken at bay. Trying to get their attention, he tapped the glass with his head. Jess thought for a moment before her eyes widened in realization. "And I got one! The usher is afraid of chickens.. What would you say if I told you I wanna break this guy's chicken machine to create the mother of all distractions," she suggested.

"How you'd figure that out?" Jesse perked a brow.

"I had some help," Jess giggled.

"Good work, Buddy," Nikki grinned as Zephyr flew back down to her.

"But you'd have to break that pane of glass. How're you going to reach it?" Olivia pointed out. "And I don't think Zephyr's strong enough to break the glass on his own."

"Let's look around. There has to be something we can do," Petra encouraged. She was not ready to let Ivor get away with this. With that, the group split up to cover more ground.

As Jess began to look around, she spotted a man performing his skills on a slime block. That's it! Maybe if she managed to get a slime block of her own, then perhaps it'll be bouncy enough to bounce one of them up onto the chicken machine. Things are finally starting to go uphill now when she spotted a nearby slime booth.

"Got something, sis?" Nikki asked, noticing her sister's bright expression.

"What do you think about a slime block, sis?" Jess grinned. "I think one is enough to help us break that chicken machine."

Nikki thought for a moment before agreeing. "Maybe.. but how are we going to get one?"

"Just follow my lead," her sister responded. She eagerly walked up to the booth, hoping that they still had some leftover slime balls left. She felt uneasy when she realized who ran it. The same woman they had mistaken for Ivor earlier. "Oh, hey, we meet again.. Heh.." She gulped uncomfortably at her cold stare. Zephyr lowered his head, allowing himself to hide in Nikki's hair to stay out of sight. "One slime block, please."

"We don't give out slime blocks here. Just slime balls. We've only got a limited supply today, so we're giving out only two per customer," she responded. The sisters were surprised how well she managed to cover her anger. "You could craft your own slime block if you had nine, though."

"Sorry about before," Jess then apologized. "We honestly thought you were someone else."
"Apology accepted," she replied blankly.

"A round of slime balls for everyone, please!" Axel said as he and the others approached the booth. Luckily, each one of them were handed two slime balls

When Nikki and Jess realized they didn't get one, they glanced at the woman, confused. "How come we didn't get one?" Nikki asked.

"Children under sixteen can't buy anything on their own at EnderCon without a legal adult," the woman replied.

"Agh! Curse you, tininess!" She grumbled as the group trotted off.

Jesse frowned, sensing a problem. "Wait, if Jess and Nikki can't get their own slimeballs, we only have eight. We need one more to make a block," he realized.

"Okay. Let's see if we can find one more slimeball," Nikki said.

"On it!" Axel replied before running off, the rest of the group splitting up as well.

She thought for a moment but froze when Zephyr flew off her head and high in the air to get a bird's view. He glanced around town for a minute before soaring down towards Lukas, who was leaning by a crafting stall, looking quite bored as he casually flipped his slimeball. Nikki grinned when she realized the blonde had a slimeball and nudging her older sister playfully, she said, "Hey Jess? I think your 'best friend' totally has the slimeball we need. Go talk to him!"

Jess glanced over at the blonde nearby before crossing her arms. "If you're still talking about what happened before, nothing happened," she huffed.

"Yeah, whatever blockhead," Nikki snickered. "Go ask him for help."

Jess rolled her eyes at her younger sister's antics before heading towards the blonde. She froze for a moment before sighing and grabbing his attention. "Hey, Lukas. Can you do me a favor?" She asked.

The blonde froze before curiously glancing down at her. "Anything's possible."
"I need slimeballs; I swear I have a really good explanation-."

"Jess!"

The blonde glanced over at her siblings and friends walking over to them. He was reminded once more of when she said that Petra got scammed out of a Diamond. Considering he doesn't have anything else better to do, he handed her the slime block. "Whatever you guys are doing, count me in," he declared.

Jess sighed in relief before smiling. Jesse however frowned, not liking the idea of Lukas joining along with them.

"Thanks Lukas!" Petra thanked before she bumped Jess' elbow, whispering in her ear, "Told you he could come in handy."

Jess couldn't help but to admit that the redhead was right. Something about him truly felt.. different. Something she's never really felt before..

"Aw, this guy isn't actually cool, is he?" Axel whined.

"Remains to be seen," Olivia scoffed, attempting to hide her unpleased demeanor of being allied with Lukas. This bothered the blonde, but he didn't dare voice it, trying his best to hide it.

"Be fair, you guys," Jess cut in, standing up for the blonde. "He hasn't done anything to squat us down."

"And he doesn't DONE anything to stop it either," Jesse scowled.

"Jesse, you mind actually paying attention to the mission? Let's put this dumb rivalry aside and be reasonable for once," Nikki said.

Lukas was just about to thank the sisters for standing up for him but froze when a tiny bat with purple eyes and purple highlights on its wings landed on Nikki's head. "Nikki-? You got a little.."

"Hm-? Oh don't mind, Zephyr. He saved me earlier at the competition and Reuben from being chopped up by a butcher," the little girl assured him as Jess began to work on crafting the slime ball.

"Is that where he came from-?" Petra asked. "What was that- thing doing in the building competition?"

"I dunno but he's cool!"

"Nik, I thought I told you to get rid of that thing," Jesse said.

"I don't think I could even if I wanted to! He won't stop following me around!" Nikki protested.

"Even so, we can't just keep a wild animal!"

"But we kept Reuben. And you."

"Oh, very amusing," Jesse rolled his eyes.

"But that's not fair! If Velvet was here, he would've let me keep him!"

"Nikki, don't get started on that again," her older brother then frowned, disliking it whenever Nikki would say how Velvet would allow her to do certain things but the thing was, Velvet was much more relaxed and calm, only being strict when he needs to be which differed from Jesse's overprotective and cautious demeanor. He knew he wasn't as well of taking care of his sisters as well as Velvet was but he was truly only trying his best.

"Jesse, you owe him two lives. What would've happened at the competition would've been deadly if he didn't show up," Olivia said, defending Nikki. "And I know how much Reuben means to you, it wouldn't be good if he was cooked into pork chops."

"..fine, you win," he finally gave in. "Welcome to the gang, Zephyr." The little bat squeaked happily before fluttering to his cheek and licking it before flying back to his previous spot. Jesse cringed a little before glancing at his middle sister. "Jess? Are you done?"

"I am now! Ta-Da! One slime block," Jess declared. She then cringed. “Gross..”

"I'll take that," Olivia said, taking the block of the crafting table she was using and placing it down between the crafting booth and the chicken booth. "Riiiiight here."

"I call dibs!" Nikki beamed. "Zephyr, give me a boost." The little bat grabbed the back of her hoodie and flew her up upon the crafting stall's roof. Nikki steadied himself for the jump before running up to the edge. She imagined everything going in slow motion as she leaped. She managed to stay focused, keeping her eyes on the slime block and once she landed on

her, the slime block reacted by bouncing her back up in the air, near the window panes. Once she was within reach, she smashed the glass with her fist, letting all the chickens roam free.

The man running the machine noticed all the chickens escaping and his eyes widened in shock. "My poultry! My precious poultry!" He wailed.

The usher noticed it too and tried to scramble from his post. "Keep your eyes closed! They will peck out your eyes!" He cried, trying to calm down the panicking crowd. He tripped over a chicken, causing him to trip, many chickens beginning to crash down on him in a wave. Finally, the entrance was guard-free.

"Nice! Now's our chance!" Petra declared. The group wasted no second rushing towards the stairs leading into the hall. Now they were one step closer to finding that guy.

◦●●◉✿ Chapter 8: Wither We Like it or Not ✿◉●●◦

Once the group ran inside the hall, they found that it was filled with people wandering about, observing the building's architecture. Although it was beautiful, that's not what they came here to do.

"Where'd he go?" Petra wondered aloud.

"There! Through that door!" Jesse alerted the others, pointing at an oak door that was crack opened, revealing nothing but darkness inside. The gang immediately rushed towards the door, however Lukas stopped, wondering what the main objective was when they caught the crook.

"What do we do once we catch him?" The blonde asked. "There are a million ways to play this. But considering this isn't my fight, I'll follow your lead."

Jesse scoffed and rolled his eyes in annoyance. Jess gave him a side glare before glancing towards the blonde and giving him a sly smirk. "I wouldn't mind a little payback," she responded.

Lukas once again felt that warm feeling and instead of ignoring it, he was more confusedn though he tried not to show it. "He deserves it for crossing Petra," he agreed.

Once the conversation was done, Jesse peaked around to see if the coast was clear. "See anything?" He asked the redhead who was also peeking out for any sight of him.

"He must've gone out another way," the redhead theorized. Jesse signaled that it was safe to the rest of the group and with that, the group steamed in, Jesse and Petra leading them. Nikki bumped into the door frame twice before Zephyr helped her inside, guiding her by tugging on the sleeve of her hoodie. Her black eye was really affecting her. As they walked down the steps, it was noticeable as to how dark it was, with barely any torches lighting the way for them.

The room seemed to resemble an old basement, though it was sorta hard to tell with all the bookshelves filled with dusty old books all over the room with potions mounted upon stands here and there.

"What is all this?" Olivia wondered as the group began to split up to search around the area. She glanced at all the books and potions stored in the hidden room.

"Looks like it used to be the basement. Weird place to have a hideout.." Jesse replied.
"I bet you anything I'll find my Wither Skull here," Petra muttered.

"And if we find anything else cool to steal along the way, so be it, right?" Axel beamed. "Axel, that's not what we're here to do," Jesse disagreed.

"I did say we wanted payback.." Jess reminded him.

"No better payback than thieving from a thief, right?" The big guy figured.

"I don't want to stoop to his level.." the redhead frowned.

"But isn't that the best way to get back at him?"

"Let's focus on finding the skull; not stealing," Jesse said.

"Jesse's right, the faster we find that thing, the faster we can leave," Nikki agreed.

Axel didn't like this however and he pouted as he crossed his arms. "Nobody ever lets me have any fun," he complained.

"We let you hang out with us," Jess replied, giving him a reassuring grin. "Hey, when we get out of here, maybe we could blow up some stuff in the forest, want to join?"

"Of course!" The big guy beamed.

Zephyr flew off Nikki's shoulder, flapping around the strange lab. He squeaked curiously before landing on the bookshelf. As he stared at the books, dust reached his nostrils, making him squeal and cough in alarm before flying back to his owner. "You okay, Buddy? Yeah, this place seems deserted.." Nikki muttered.

"Can you really understand what that thing says?" Jesse inquired.

"I call him as ‘the Reuben to my Jesse’. It makes it easier to ask that question yourself. Can't help but to feel a little bit of deja vu though, if you know what I am," she replied, reminding him how he and Jess somehow understand every oink Reuben comes out with and how Velvet asked him the exact same question when they was bonding with Reuben. Zephyr suddenly began shivering in fear when he spotted the Enderman's head mounted on an armor stand nearby. "Don't worry, I don't think he knows EnderBats exist," she comforted him, rubbing his head affectionately before starting to observe the library.

Petra was digging through a large chest, looking for anything that may at least make up for the Skull if they don't find it. When she noticed Jesse heading towards her, she grinned. "Oh hello," she greeted before pulling out a golden sword and giving it a test swing. "Too heavy. And too soft."

"But super-flashy," Jesse beamed.

"Yeah; I don't think this guy does much fighting.. Sorry about what I said about Axel earlier. I guess I was just frustrated.. but y'know, you didn't HAD to do this for me, Jesse. I really appreciate it though," the redhead thanked.

"No no it's okay, I-.. I had to. I wasn't going to let some creep get away with scamming you," he reassured her. "We.. haven't actually talked in a while. I know you've been busy but-."

"I'd.. rather not talk about it.." the Auburn Warrior sighed before standing up. "Y'know what? You're right. And it IS super-flashy. You still have that stone sword from earlier?

"Yeah, but I'm down for extras."

"Here," she handed him another sword she found, this one being an iron one. "Just in case that stone sword of yours becomes dirt."

"Woah, thanks.." Jesse really wanted to ask her how she was doing, and most importantly; how he's been feeling about her. Sure, she does lash out and have her rude moments but.. he feels so connected to her. How is he going to say this..? Maybe after all this is over, they would be able to talk and maybe start hanging out? He sighed before walking away, going to finish the mission in hand.

Jess was wondering as to how they were able to find the Wither Skull. There were so many hiding places it could be, and there was the thought that it probably wasn't in the room but somewhere else in the hall. Heck, that creepy guy must've had it. And although Jesse and Petra said not to take anything, she couldn't help but to snatch a potion of leaping she found to show off later. She sighed, starting to lose up before noticing Axel nearby, staring at all the items around the room longingly. "Hey Axel! Found anything?" She asked.

"I wanna steal that. And that. I just wanna touch that," he whined.

Jess didn't know how to answer so she just left him alone. As she once again began to look around, she noticed Lukas nearby, looking through a bookshelf. She smiled a little and began to head over to him. "Hey Lukas! Have you found anything?" She questioned.

"You want an instruction on How to Build a Creepy Liar Using Everyday Objects?" He replied, reading out of the title of one of the books he saw.

"Just keep looking, we'll be out of here soon. I hope," Jess tried to encourage him, though feeling a lot less motivation herself.

"I know. And Jess? Thanks for letting me into the gang," the blonde thanked, scratching the back of his neck nervously.

Jess was surprised by this but gave him a warm smile. "It was my pleasure.. And don't worry about Jesse, Axel and Olivia. They're going to come around soon."

Lukas knew that the last thing Jesse would want is to see him, knowing the problems they faced when they were children. He didn't want to talk about it and instead simply bowed his head. "..I hope.."

"Honestly, you could hang out with us anytime you need. You don't need Aiden and his gang to put you down.. I see how he's been treating you. To me, I think you deserve better," Jess vitalized. "I'll.. give you time to think."

Lukas froze at her words. No one had ever said that to him before. Sure, Aiden is becoming more and more aggressive, even attempting to push Nikki into lava just because she was standing up to him. He had to admit he hasn't been exactly happy with his friends for a while.. but is that worth leaving them completely..? He already lost a friend because of the problem before and he's just now making peace with his mistake while also trying to make peace with Jesse's gang. He hopes that Jess is right.. maybe they WILL come around someday..

Nikki started to get bored. Not only could she hardly find any clues as to what they're looking for, she also doesn't know when the man is going to be back. Part of her kinda wanted to head back up before someone, aka security finds them but she knew that it'll be worth showing that guy who's he messing with. She froze when she noticed Axel staring at a fancy potion in awe. Sighing, she headed over to him.

"Find anything?" She asked.

"You're not going to believe this, but I swear I had a dream about this," Axel told her, not taking his eyes off the potion.

"You're right. I don't believe you," Nikki said.

He simply ignored the stinging statement and instead reached for the potion. "Okay, I know this is a big step, but I'd be honored if you came home with me."

"C'mon man. Go make yourself useful and find that skull," the little girl ordered. "I am.." he replied, hardly listening anymore and snatching the potion from its stand.

"Uh, no. You're doing the opposite of what I asked you. There's no way he won't notice his fancy potion missing!"

"A good thief always covers his tracks," Axel said, trying to educate the little girl before he took another potion with the same liquid as the special one and put it right in its place. "Fixed it!"

Nikki sighed before she simply walked off, heading towards Olivia, who was observing a large bookshelf wall. She didn't know how but had a feeling that something wasn't right about it. "Found anything?" Nikki asked, catching her by surprise.

"He's no slouch when it comes to enchanting. This is pretty advanced stuff," Olivia responded calmly, but it didn't hide how impressed she was.

Zephyr suddenly flew from her shoulder and towards a lever hidden by a dark corner. Nikki gasped, slowly walking towards the lever that was just waiting to be touched. Nikki gave it its wish, flickering the lever. Almost immediately, the bookshelf wall slid down, revealing the oddest thing they've ever seen. Weird blocks in a sort of T-shape pose.

"What the hell is this stuff?" Jesse asked as he and the others gathered around to investigate.. whatever the hell they're looking at.

"Soul sand. It was everywhere in the Nether," Petra answered.

"What about the block in the middle?" Nikki pointed to the odd block in the center of the build. The middle of the block seemed to be glowing? Olivia stared at it in awe. She had never seen anything like it. Letting curiosity get the better of her, she stepped closer to it.

"I've never seen one of these before.. I wonder if I just- take a closer look.." She muttered, holding out her hand as she attempted to touch the middle of the block. "Do you feel that? It's-.. almost pulsing."

"Don't touch that Olivia!" Jess quickly warned, holding her friend back before she could possibly hurt herself.

"I was just curious," the engineer frowned.

"Don't forget what we're here for; find that skull," Jesse reminded her. Nodding once, she stepped out of the way. Once she did however, Jesse noticed a chest sitting there by the odd blocks. Walking up to it, he opened it slowly. Nikki saw his pupils dilated when he saw what was sitting inside. "Sooooo.. good news, weird news," he said. "I found the skull but.."

The gang peeked inside at once and understood what he was trying to say. The chest was hiding three Wither Skulls inside!

"What the hell? Why'd I risk my neck for that skull when he got two of them already?" Petra scowled. "He was in such a rush to get it, too."

"There's got to be something more going on here," Nikki concluded. "Something we just don't see."

"We need to get out of here," Jess said urgently. They could see fear dilating in her pupils. "Whatever this guy is doing, I don't want to be around when he gets back."

"But we can't just leave! If he's doing something shady, we need to figure out what- and why. This got to be a connection," her little sister disagreed. Zephyr squeaked, seemingly agreeing with her.

"Nikki's right. This has gotta be connected somehow," Jesse thought. "This chest with the skulls was hidden back here with everything else; that's gotta mean something."

"But what?" Jess asked.

Lukas didn't say a word, connecting the dots as his allies spoke. His eyes widened when he realized what it was. Soul sand? Three Wither Skulls? Ivor was doing something more malicious than just cheating on a deal.

"I think I know what's going on here," He said. "Soul Sand plus Three Wither Skulls.. that's the recipe for a Wither."

"But a wither..?" Petra repeated, her eyes widening in shock. "That's-..."

"One of the worst monsters there is!" Nikki finished.

"We came here for the skull. Well, we found it," Jesse said.

"Maybe we should take it and get out of here while we still can," Petra advised.

Just then, they all heard a creak at the entrance. Everyone froze. That could only mean one thing; he's back! Lukas whipped his head around towards the noise, his heart beating faster. "Uh, guys?" He whimpered.

"Scatter!" Petra mouthed. She didn't need to say it twice, the group immediately scattering and running off in different directions. Zephyr pulled the lever to reclose the bookcase before hanging upside down on a black wool block and shutting his eyes.

Lukas jumped inside an empty chest and closed the lid while everything else hid behind the bookshelves. The friends stayed quiet, not knowing what to do, what to say, or even how to react. An eerie silence swallowed the entire room whole. Everything felt tense.. It almost felt as if everything was frozen in time..

Editor's Note: The author split the episode into two parts, so don't worry. This is just Part 1 of more epicness ahead. Go ahead and read Part 2, assuming you have it downloaded.

◦●●⊙✿ About the Author ✿⊙●●◦

Hello, I'm Isabella, Izzy for short! Just your average teen making fanfics about her favorite shows and stuff LOL. I'm in a shit ton of fandoms and I'm interested in starting new fanfics outside of MCSM. This includes:

MCSM ⚔️ (I will stay in the fandom until I die)
Avatar, the Last Airbender/Legend of Korra 🌊🪨🔥💨
Heathers (mostly the movie) ❤️💚💛💙
The Owl House 🦉
Amphibia 🐸
MLP 🦄
Voltron 🪐
Precure 🪄
The Babysitters Club (graphic novels only) 👶🏾
Winx Club 🧚‍♀️
Sofia the First (kinda) 👸
Ever After High 🧚
Monster High 👾
Royale High 👑
Rainbow Magic 🧚‍♂️
The Ghost and Molly McGee 👻
Powerpuff Girls 💙🩷💚

I also ship a shit ton of stuff like McSawyer, Jesstra, Jetra, Lukesse, Sashannarcy, Lumity, Raeda, Huntlow, Klance, Rarijack, Flutterdash, Twipie + Sunset. A lot more that I'm too lazy to list lol. I also include OC's.. if that's fine with any of y'all, I love adding OC's 😭😭 I hope y'all enjoy my stories and have a wonderful day:D

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